

CLAIMS:

1. A method, comprising:

obtaining information at an administrative entity concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls gathered at one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks;

analyzing the information to determine whether any of the calls are inactive; and

sending at least one command from the administrative entity to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are determined to be inactive.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the information concerning the VOIP calls includes call IDs and uptime values.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of analyzing the information includes determining whether any of the uptime values exceeds a threshold level.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein a determination is made that a given call is inactive when the uptime value of that call exceeds the threshold level.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the threshold level is variable dependent on one or more other parameters.

6. The method of claim 3, wherein threshold level is 180 minutes.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the information includes at least one of: (i) numbers of data packets transmitted during the VOIP calls; and (ii) numbers of data packets received during VOIP calls.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of analyzing the information includes determining whether the numbers of data packets transmitted during the VOIP calls, and/or the numbers of data packets received during VOIP calls, are substantially unchanging over time.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein determination is made that a given call is inactive when the number of data packets transmitted and/or received during that call over a given period of time does not exceed a threshold level.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the threshold level is variable dependent on one or more other parameters.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of sending the at least one command includes transmitting the at least one command from the administrative entity to the one or more session controllers over the packet switched network.

12. A method, comprising:
sending a request for information from an administrative entity to one or more session controllers operatively coupled

between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers; and

sending at least one command from the administrative entity to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are inactive.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of sending the request for information from the administrative entity to the one or more session controllers is carried out at a predetermined rate.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the predetermined rate is variable depending on one or more other parameters.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the one or more other parameters include a processing load on the session controllers.

16. The method of claim 12, further comprising:
receiving the information at the administrative entity;
and
analyzing the information to determine whether any of the calls are inactive.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein:
the information concerning the VOIP calls includes call IDs and uptime values;

the step of analyzing the information includes determining that a call is inactive when the uptime value thereof exceeds a threshold level.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein:

the information includes numbers of data packets transmitted and/or received during the VOIP calls;

the step of analyzing the information includes determining that a call is inactive when the numbers of data packets transmitted and/or received during that call are substantially unchanging over time.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of sending the at least one command includes transmitting the at least one command from the administrative entity to the one or more session controllers over the one or more packet switched networks.

20. A method, comprising:

receiving a request for information from an administrative entity at one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers;

sending the information from the one or more session controllers to the administrative entity; and

receiving at least one command at the one or more session controllers from the administrative entity causing the one or

more session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are inactive.

21. An administrative server, comprising:

a receiver operable to obtain information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls gathered at one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks;

an analyzer operable to process the information to determine whether any of the calls are inactive; and

a transmitter operable to send at least one command to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are determined to be inactive.

22. The administrative server of claim 21, wherein the information concerning the VOIP calls includes call IDs and uptime values.

23. The administrative server of claim 22, wherein the analyzer of the administrative server is operable to determine whether any of the uptime values exceeds a threshold level.

24. The administrative server of claim 23, wherein determination is made that a given call is inactive when the uptime value of that call exceeds the threshold level.

25. The administrative server of claim 23, wherein the administrative server is operable to modify the threshold level dependent on one or more other parameters.

26. The administrative server of claim 23, wherein threshold level is 180 minutes.

27. The administrative server of claim 20, wherein the information includes at least one of: (i) numbers of data packets transmitted during the VOIP calls; and (ii) numbers of data packets received during VOIP calls.

28. The administrative server of claim 27, wherein the analyzer of the administrative server is operable to determine whether the numbers of data packets transmitted during the VOIP calls, and/or the numbers of data packets received during VOIP calls, are substantially unchanging over time.

29. The administrative server of claim 28, wherein a determination is made that a given call is inactive when the number of data packets transmitted and/or received during that call over a given period of time does not exceed a threshold level.

30. The administrative server of claim 29, wherein the administrative server is operable to vary the threshold level dependent on one or more other parameters.

31. The administrative server of claim 20, wherein the administrative server is operable to transmit the at least one

command to the one or more session controllers over the one or more packet switched networks.

32. An administrative server, comprising: a transmitter operable to: (i) send a request for information to one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers; and (ii) send at least one command to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are determined to be inactive.

33. The administrative server of claim 32, wherein the server is operable to send the request for information to the one or more session controllers at a predetermined rate.

34. The administrative server of claim 33, wherein the predetermined rate is variable depending on one or more other parameters.

35. The administrative server of claim 33, wherein the one or more other parameters include a processing load on the session controllers.

36. The administrative server of claim 32, further comprising:

a receiver operable to receive the information from the one or more session controllers; and

an analyzer operable to determine whether any of the calls are inactive.

37. The administrative server of claim 32, wherein:
the information concerning the VOIP calls includes call IDs and uptime values;

the analyzer is operable to determine that a call is inactive when the uptime value thereof exceeds a threshold level.

38. The administrative server of claim 32, wherein:
the information includes numbers of data packets transmitted and/or received during the VOIP calls;

the analyzer is operable to determine that a call is inactive when the numbers of data packets transmitted and/or received during that call are substantially unchanging over time.

39. The administrative server of claim 32, the transmitter is operable to send the at least one command to the one or more session controllers over the one or more packet switched networks.

40. An apparatus operable to execute a software program that causes a processor and supporting devices to carry out actions, comprising:

sending a request for information to one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the information concerning one or more voice-over-

Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers;

receiving the information from the one or more session controllers;

analyzing the information to determine whether any of the calls are inactive; and

sending at least one command to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are determined to be inactive.

41. An apparatus, comprising:

means for sending a request for information to one or more session controllers operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers;

means for receiving the information from the one or more session controllers;

means for analyzing the information to determine whether any of the calls are inactive; and

means for sending at least one command to the one or more session controllers that causes the session controllers to drop any VOIP calls that are determined to be inactive.

42. A session controller operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, comprising:

a receiver operable to receive a request for information from an administrative entity, the information concerning one

or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the session controller; and

a transmitter operable to send the information to the administrative entity,

wherein the session controller is operable to receive at least one command from the administrative entity causing the session controller to drop any VOIP calls that are inactive.

43. A session controller operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks and operable to execute a software program that causes the session controller and any associated devices to execute steps, comprising:

receiving a request for information from an administrative entity, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers;

sending the information to the administrative entity; and

receiving at least one command from the administrative entity causing the session controller to drop any VOIP calls that are inactive.

44. A session controller operatively coupled between one or more packet switched networks and one or more public switched telephone networks, the session controller comprising:

means for receiving a request for information from an administrative entity, the information concerning one or more voice-over-Internet (VOI) calls being supported by the one or more session controllers;

means for sending the information to the administrative entity; and

means for receiving at least one command from the administrative entity causing the session controller to drop any VOIP calls that are inactive.